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Good News for East Hartford's Economic Development

East Hartford received \$4 million in the state bonding package to complete improvements around Rentschler Field. This is in addition to the \$9.5 million in bonding that was approved three years ago.

East Hartford hopes to develop a "flyover" access lane from I-84 over Silver Lane to the west side of Rentschler Field, as well as build some public roads within the property.

Increased access will help East Hartford attract commercial and technological companies to the area. With The University of Connecticut football stadium already on site and plans for the East Hartford - Glastonbury magnet school, the new road will improve access to the area. Road work is crucial for the town's tax base and our hopes are for a "research campus" that will host hundreds of jobs.

East Hartford has also received a \$500,000 grant from the state to be used at Martin Park. This funding will be used for soccer fields which will benefit the children in the area, providing sports and recreation. Studies show positive alternatives for children leave them less time for negative activities. Martin Park soccer fields will provide positive alternatives for our children.



Tim Larson-Mayor, Melody Currey-State Representative, Roger Moss-Parks and Recreation Director, Paul Fitzgerald-Soccer League.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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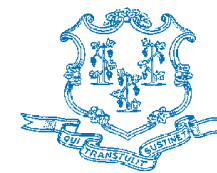
Major Acts




SERVING EAST HARTFORD

STATE REPRESENTATIVE MELODY CURREY

SESSION 2004



Included in this newsletter are highlights of the 2004 legislative session. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to call me at 240-8500. Your concerns are essential to our decision-making process. As always, it is a privilege to serve you as state representative. 

State Budget

This year we passed a budget that includes no new taxes, eliminates the need to securitize over \$300 million in tobacco revenue and is \$136 million under the spending cap. **East Hartford will see a \$2.88 million increase in state grant funding.**

- The Educational Cost Sharing Grant was increased \$40 million. **East Hartford will see an additional \$1.6 million in ECS funding.**
- The ConnPACE asset test and estate recovery was eliminated.
- **East Hartford's Early Reading Success and School Readiness funding increased by \$172,612.**
- Beginning in 2005 the \$500 property tax credit will be reinstated .
- The Sales Tax Free Week for clothing and footwear costing less than \$300 has been reinstated for the fourth week of August 2004.
- Co-payments and premiums were eliminated for Medicaid and HUSKY clients. We also extended state benefits to legal immigrants.
- We added \$4.6 million for the Department of Mental Retardation waiting list.
- The budget added \$1 million in financial aid for students at the state's public and private colleges and universities.
- We added \$3.4 million for more state troopers.

East Hartford's Fair Share: The town will receive an additional \$250,000 in priority school money, bringing **East Hartford's total priority school funding to \$1.06 million.** Town Aid Road funding for East Hartford increased by \$78,136, bringing **aid for East Hartford's roads to \$207,839.** As a result of legislation that I helped write, East Hartford receives a Payment In Lieu of Taxes grant from the state for the UCONN stadium at Rentschler Field. This year our town will see an increase of \$647,440 in **PILOT funding, which will total \$803,689.**



Melody Receives Wilbur Cross Award

Melody received the 2003 Wilbur Cross Award for her legislative advocacy for the humanities. She was honored for spearheading the legislature's crafting of a comprehensive, fair and workable merger of Connecticut's cultural agencies last year. Her plan will serve as a model for other states.

School Readiness Funding

School Readiness has a proven record of success in preparing Connecticut's three and four year olds for elementary school and eliminating the achievement gap. After seven years of no increase in funding and rising costs, I was successful in raising the per child slot reimbursement and increasing the competitive grants. Unallocated and unused School Readiness slot funds can now be re-distributed to programs that have a waiting list and for professional development of school readiness staff. **East Hartford will see \$1.27 million in School Readiness and \$625,003 in Early Reading Success funding.** (PA 04-215)

Child Poverty Council

The number of Connecticut children living in poverty increased from 76,572 to 82,866 in the last decade according to the most recent U.S. Census. I advocated for legislation that would establish a Child Poverty Council comprised of legislative leaders, field experts, service providers, and parents. The council's mission would be to reduce the number of Connecticut children living in poverty by 50 percent by July 1, 2014. (PA 04-238)

School Nutrition and Recess

Balanced nutrition and physical activity help students perform in the classroom. Legislation was passed this session that requires school boards to provide all full-day students with a 20-minute daily lunch break which includes nutritious food and drinks, such as low-fat dairy products and fresh fruit. In addition, daily physical exercise for students in kindergarten through grade five is required. (PA 04-244)

Penalties for Enticing a Minor

In response to the number of people arrested for downloading child pornography from the Internet and enticing a minor to engage in sexual activity, tougher penalties were enacted. Under this new bill, guidelines will be established based on the number of pornographic pictures offenders have in their possession. People charged with these offenses are barred from the pretrial Accelerated Rehabilitation program. In addition, sentences must include between 10 and 35 years of probation rather than the current five years. It also requires a 10-year sex offender registration and submission of DNA samples for those convicted of enticement and child pornography possession offenses. (PA 04-139)



Organ Donation Registry

Legislation was enacted creating an organ donor registry using Department of Motor Vehicles records. The registry will be available to organ donor procurement agencies. In order to protect the wishes of the donating individual, two witnesses must be present when the driver's license, indicating "donor," is signed. In the event of an accident, this formality allows access to the donor registry if the license is missing. (PA 04-122)

Home Heating Oil Dealers

In order to protect consumers, legislation was passed which requires home heating oil dealers to display their state registration numbers in all advertisements and dealer prepared information. It also requires that the dealer's insurance company notify the Department of Consumer Protection in writing when it cancels an insurance policy. The law requires that dealers have general liability insurance coverage and \$1 million coverage for environmental damage. The Consumer Protection Commissioner can revoke the registration of a dealer without the required insurance.

This bill also requires that when home heating oil dealers advertise a price, they must offer that price for at least 24 hours or until the next advertised price, whichever comes first. (PA 04-194)

Veterans

The General Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to Connecticut's honorable servicemen and women. Legislation was passed that enables both active duty servicemen and women and veterans or their immediate families to continue to receive certain veterans' property tax exemptions if they move to a new town within that assessment year. Tax assessors must provide a certificate that verifies eligibility to each person who receives an exemption. (PA 04-40)



Any veteran, honorably discharged from active service in the U. S. Armed Forces, regardless of war service, is now eligible for burial in the state veterans' cemetery and admission to the Veterans' Home. (PA 04-169)

State Police Cruisers

Police vehicles are recognized as a symbol of public safety throughout the state of Connecticut. These vehicles are put in situations in which most vehicles are not, such as high speed chases and collisions. In order to better protect the officers in these situations, all police cruisers purchased after the 2005 calendar year will be required to have manufacturer installed fire suppression units. These systems will release a chemical to put out fires and can be activated both manually and automatically. (PA 04-133)

